

12-441 Louisiana Tax Commission

Agency Description

The mission of the Louisiana Tax Commission (LTC) is to administer and enforce the Louisiana laws relating to local property tax assessments and assessment of public utility properties; and to formulate and adopt rules and guidelines to ensure uniformity of tax assessments throughout the state.

The goals of the Louisiana Tax Commission are:

1. To use oversight authority to ensure the fair and uniform administration of taxation by local parish assessors.
2. To achieve the highest possible degree of voluntary compliance in reporting by taxpayers.
3. To improve taxpayer relations and the Commission's image with the taxpaying public, local elected officials, legislators and other state taxing authorities.
4. To maintain a dedicated and professional staff through education and training to improve employee productivity through the use of updated technology.

The Louisiana Tax Commission is composed of three commission members, along with a confidential assistant; staff and support is provided through the Property Taxation Regulatory/Oversight Program. Public hearings are conducted by the commission: (1) on appeals from tax recipient bodies or assessors from the action of the parish board of review; (2) on protest of valuation set by the commission on public service properties; and (3) on appeals by assessors and tax recipients concerning ratio studies conducted by the commission. The commission measures the level of appraisals or assessments and the uniformity of assessments for each major class of property by parish throughout the state and annually notifies each assessor and tax recipient body of the results of its measurements; prepares and issues annual guidelines for use by local assessors, tax representatives, and taxpayers; develops, maintains and enforces a statewide system for preparation of assessment lists, tax rolls, and other necessary forms; and reviews and certifies assessment rolls. The commission also determines tax assessments of all insurance companies, financial institutions and bank stock companies and distributes assessment values statewide to local assessors for placement on roll books. The commission appraises and determines fair market value of all operating properties owned by public service companies in the State of Louisiana, distributes assessed valuations to various local taxing jurisdictions, and performs audits to assure compliance. Direct assistance by trained field personnel of the Tax Commission is given to the staffs of many local assessors. In addition, the Commission provides information on ownership and location of certain movable property to assessors. Ratio studies are used by the commission to establish whether assessment values of real property are proper and uniform. Ratio studies are conducted in each parish annually. Real estate appraisals used in the ratio study are representative of all different types of property found in the parishes. The estimates of values are determined and compared to the assessments. The assessed values should be within 10% of that indicated by the appraisals. Appraisals and audits, for tax assessment purposes, are conducted with respect to owners of all public service properties in Louisiana. These properties are assessed by the Tax Commission at the rate of 10% of fair market value of land, 25% of fair market value for all other property owned by public service companies, with the exception of airlines, railroads, private car companies, and electric co-ops, which are assessed at the rate of 15% of fair market value. Each company's assessed valuation is distributed to the various local taxing jurisdictions by the Tax Commission. Tax Commission personnel perform over 600 appraisals on public service property annually. Audits are

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performed to assure compliance as well as to verify financial information. Tax Commission auditing personnel conduct audits with respect to assessments of personal property in each parish annually. An audit procedure allows staff to perform out-ofstate audits and provides for self-generated expenses related thereto. Program staff also gather and analyze data for biennial reports issued by the Tax Commission. During the fiscal year 1998-1999 the legislature authorized a new program for the LTC titled, "Supervision and Assistance to Local Assessors. This program will help establish an electronic link between the Assessors' office and the Louisiana Tax Commission.

AGENCY BUDGET SUMMARY

	ACTUAL 2000-2001	ACT 12 2001-2002	EXISTING 2001-2002	CONTINUATION 2002-2003	RECOMMENDED 2002-2003	RECOMMENDED OVER/(UNDER) EXISTING
MEANS OF FINANCING:						
STATE GENERAL FUND (Direct)	\$1,719,035	\$1,878,659	\$1,878,659	\$1,915,933	\$2,029,193	\$150,534
STATE GENERAL FUND BY:						
Interagency Transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fees & Self-gen. Revenues	0	0	560,913	560,913	480,000	(80,913)
Statutory Dedications	660,913	560,913	0	31,118	31,118	31,118
Interim Emergency Board	0	0	0	0	0	0
FEDERAL FUNDS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL MEANS OF FINANCING	\$2,379,948	\$2,439,572	\$2,439,572	\$2,507,964	\$2,540,311	\$100,739
EXPENDITURES & REQUEST:						
Property Taxation Regulatory/Oversight	\$2,347,628	\$2,389,572	\$2,389,572	\$2,457,964	\$2,490,311	\$100,739
Supervision and Assistance to Local Assessors	32,320	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND REQUEST	\$2,379,948	\$2,439,572	\$2,439,572	\$2,507,964	\$2,540,311	\$100,739
AUTHORIZED FULL-TIME						
EQUIVALENTS: Classified	30	32	32	32	31	(1)
Unclassified	4	4	4	4	4	0
TOTAL	34	36	36	36	35	(1)